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Message Text

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17
ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 SS-14 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02

L-01 INR-05 CIAE-00 IGA-01 EB-03 ACDA-10 MC-01 /061 W
---------- 013198
P R 120900Z JUN 75
FM AMEMBASSY SANAA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1468
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCEUR
USMTM DHAHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 1468

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR
SUBJECT: DEPUTY COMMANDER IN CHIEF ON SAUDI MILITARY ASSISTANCE

REF: SANA 1460, SANA 1461, JIDDA 4141

1. DURING JUNE 12 CALL (ARRANGED AT HIS REQUEST), DEPUTY COMMANDER IN CHIEF AHMAD AL-GHASHMI BRIEFED ME ON HIS RECENT

TALKS WITH SAUDI MINISTER OF DEFENSE SULTAN WHICH OCCURRED DURING ATTENDANCE BY BOTH MEN AT SUEZ CANAL OPENING. AL-GHASHMI STATES THAT WHILE SAUDIS SEEMED FRIENDLY AND ENCOURAGING SULTAN DID NOT EVINCE ANY SENSE OF URGENCY TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE US/SAUDI PROGRAM TO MODERNIZE THE YEMENI ARY. CONFIRMING WHAT SULTAN RECENTLY TOLD AMBASSADOR AKINS (SEE JIDDA 4147 (GHASHMI SAID THAT SULTAN INDICATED SAUDIS ARE NOW WAITING FOR YEMENI ELECTIONS TO OCCUR BEFORE MAKING NEXT MOVE. GHASHMI TOLD ME THAT HE ADVISED SULTAN THAT
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PREPARATIONS FOR ELECTIONS WOULD NOEBE COMPLETED FOR SEVERAL

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MONTHS BECAUSE "PRESIDENT HAMDI DOES NOT WANT TO BE RUSHED",
AND THAT ELECTIONS THEMSELVES WILL PROBABLY NOT OCCUR BEFORE END
OF YEAR. GHASHMI ADVISED SULTAN THAT YARG CANNOT WAIT

THAT LONG FOR SAUDIS TO DECIDE ON MODERNIZATION PROGRAM.

GHASHMI ADDED THAT IN ANY EVENT SAUDIS HAVE GOOD IDEA NOW OF WHICH
WAY ELECTIONS WILL GO FROM MAKE-UP OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE
(SEE SANA 1460) WHICH INCLUDES AS ITS HEAD ABDALLAH AL-HAJRI
FORMER CONSERVATIVE PRIMIN AND CLOSE FRIENDS OF SAUDIS.

2. GHASHMI CONTINUED THAT IN VIEW OF CONTINUED SAUDI
PROCRASTINATION HE HOPES USG WILL DO SOMETHING TO "ENCOURAGE"
SAG TO MOVE FORWARD NOW. HE EMPHASIZED SEVERAL TIMES HOW
IMPORTANT IT ISFOR SAUDIS TO "TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PRESENT
OPPORTUNITY". HE STRESSED THAT HAMDI AND THE MODERATES ARE
IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY AND FOR SAUDIS TO CONTINUE
TO CONJURE UP INTERNAL LEFTIST BUG-A-BEAR IS FOOLISH. IN THIS
REGARD GHASHMI ALSO SAID THAT SOVIETS HAVE IN LAST
SEVERAL WEEKS STEPPED UP THEIR IMPORTUNINGS BY PROMISING
YARG TO RE-SUPPLY THE YEMENI ARMY WITH THREE TIMES THE EQUIPMENT
WHICH THE SAUDIS MIGHT OFFER, IF THE YARG WILL SEND A MILITARY
TEAM TO MOSCOW. GHASHMI EMPYASIZED THAT THIS OFFER IS NOT
BEING GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BUT HE ADMITTED THAT IT
IS CAUSING MUTTERINGS AMONG THE LOWER ECHELONS IN THE ARMY ABOUT
SAUDI DELAYS.

3. COMMENT: GHASHMI'S PRESENTATION WAS MADE IN LOW KEY,
CORDIAL AND OPEN MANNER WHICH HAS BECOME CUSTOMARY
IN OUR DEALINGS WITH ONE ANOTHER. NONETHELESS, IT WAS
OBVIOUS THAT HE IS NOW BEGINNING TO BECOME SOMEWHAT CONCERNED
IF NOT FRUSTRATED OVER SAUDI DILATORINESS. AT SAME TIME IT
WAS OBVIOUS HE DOSEN'T KNOW QUITE WHICH WAY TO TURN AND HAS
AGAIN COME TMSUS IN THE HOPE THAT WE MIGHT DO SOMETHING. AS
I SAID IN REFTEL (SANA 1461) I AM AT A LOSS AS TO WHAT SHOUDL BE
OUR NEXT MOVE WITH THE SAUDIS BUT SOMETHING WILL HAVE TO BE DONE
FAIRLY SOON. I LEAVE THIS TO THE EMBASSY IN JIDDA AND TO
THE DEPARTMENT BUT I MUST SAY I AM RAPIDLY RUNNING OUT OF
SINCERE SOUNDING PHRASES TO PEDDLE TO OUR YEMENI FRIENDS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SANAA01468
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750204-1158
From: SANAA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750656/aaaabzem.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 SANA 1460, 75 SANA 1461, 75 JIDDA 4141
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <17 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPUTY COMMANDER IN CHIEF ON SAUDI MILITARY ASSISTANCE
TAGS: PFOR, YE, (GHASHMI, AHMAD AL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006